



GRAIN TRANSPORTATION REPORT

Agricultural Marketing Service
United States Department of Agriculture



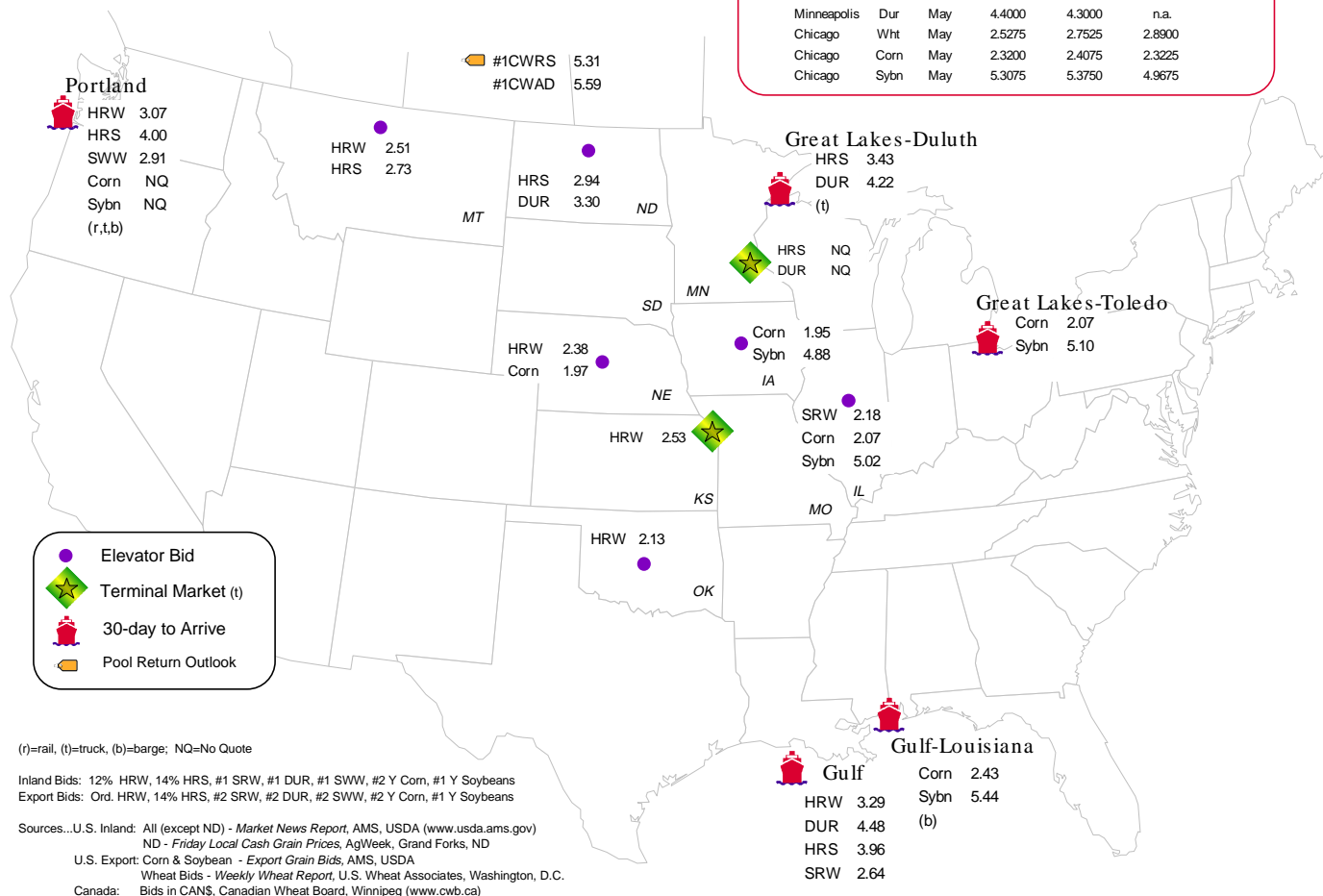
MARCH 28, 2000

March 29-31	National Grain & Feed 104 th Annual Conf.	San Diego, CA	202-289-0873 (ph) 202-289-5388 (fax)
March 30-31	Farming For The Future: National Conf. Of State Legislators & The Assembly On State Issues	Denver, CO	Vicki Rodriguez 303-830-2200
April 5	Ag Shipper Transportation Workshop	Atlanta, GA	202-467-8380 (ph)
April 9-11	Canada Grains Council Annual Conf.	Winnipeg, Manitoba	204-942-2254 (ph) analysis@canadagrainscouncil.ca
April 11-13	17 th International Intermodal Expo 2000	Atlanta, GA	800-243-4021 (ph) 404-584-7458 (ph-int'l) 404-584-0685 (fax)
April 13-15	Taking Ag. Into The Next Millenium	Ottawa, Canada	V. Davidson 613-989-3976
April 13-15	14 th B.C. Towboat Industry Conference	Victoria, B.C., Canada	604-687-9677 cmc@direct.ca
May 1-3	Agricultural Machinery Conference	Cedar Rapids, IA	515-532-6025 (ph) 515-532-3553 (fax) sgluch@saver.com
May 9-10	WorldOrganics 2000	London, England	+44 1892 533813 (ph) +44 1892 544895 (fax) conferences@agra-europe.com
May 30-31	Rail Transportation Conference: Rail Logistics	Philadelphia, PA	Alyssa Schneiderman 212-837-7163 (ph) aschneiderman@mail.joc.com
May 31-June 2	Ports America 2000 Conference & Exhibition: Port Operation & International Logistics	Philadelphia, PA	Alyssa Schneiderman 212-837-7163 (ph) aschneiderman@mail.joc.com
June 5-7	Corn Utilization & Technology Conf.	St. Paul, MN	Jennifer Snyder 202-331-1634 (ph) jsnyder@corn.org
June 18-22	117 th American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) Convention	San Francisco, CA	202-638-3128 (ph) 202-638-3171 (fax)
June 19-20	2000 Legislative & Leadership Conf. of the Ag. Transporters Conference (ATC)	Washington, DC	Fletcher Hall 703-838-7999 (ph)
July 23-26	Conference on Transportation & Environment for the 21 st Century	Pittsburgh, PA	202-334-2934 (ph) 202-334-2003 (fax)

.Report is prepared by Karl Hacker, Agricultural Economist, Transportation & Marketing, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA (202) 690-1304. Report design by Kimberly Vachal, Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute, North Dakota State University. You can retrieve this document from our Automatic Fax System by using the handset on your fax machine and dialing (202) 690-1707. This report can be found on the Internet at www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/grain.htm. E-mail comments to GTR@usda.gov.

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Futures:				Week Ago	Year Ago
			03/24/00	03/17/00	03/26/99
Kansas City	Wht	May	2.7800	2.9975	3.1500
Minneapolis	Wht	May	3.2050	3.2750	n.a.
Minneapolis	Dur	May	4.4000	4.3000	n.a.
Chicago	Wht	May	2.5275	2.7525	2.8900
Chicago	Corn	May	2.3200	2.4075	2.3225
Chicago	Sybn	May	5.3075	5.3750	4.9675



The graph displays the average cost per car for two trading strategies over a three-year period. The BNSF-SWAP strategy (black line) shows a peak in late 1997, a sharp decline into negative territory in early 1998, and another peak in late 1998. The UP-POOL strategy (purple line) follows a similar pattern but with higher peaks and lower troughs, particularly in late 1997 and late 1998. Both strategies converge to near-zero values by early 2000.

Delivery Month-Year	BNSF-SWAP (\$/Car)	UP-POOL (\$/Car)
Sep-97	80	110
Oct-97	175	200
Nov-97	180	230
Dec-97	125	220
Jan-98	65	145
Feb-98	-15	75
Mar-98	-90	10
Apr-98	-130	-30
May-98	-140	-40
Jun-98	-30	0
Jul-98	55	50
Aug-98	105	105
Sep-98	125	155
Oct-98	165	190
Nov-98	115	140
Dec-98	35	65
Jan-99	-10	15
Feb-99	-30	5
Mar-99	-45	0
Apr-99	-50	-10
May-99	-45	-10
Jun-99	-10	10
Jul-99	0	30
Aug-99	25	65
Sep-99	60	100
Oct-99	70	105
Nov-99	10	30
Dec-99	-40	-10
Jan-00	-45	-20
Feb-00	-45	-30
Mar-00	-40	-40
Apr-00	-50	-30
May-00	-45	-20
Jun-00	-10	10
Jul-00	-10	20
Aug-00	15	35
Sep-00	30	45

Rail Car 'Auction' Offerings				
Delivery for:	Apr-00		Jun-00	
	<u>Offered</u>	<u>% Sold</u>	<u>Offered</u>	<u>% Sold</u>
BNSF-COT	11,999	2%	12,000	1%
UP-GCAS	5,400	0%	5,400	2%
Source: Transportation & Marketing /AMS/USDA; www.bnsf.com; www.uprr.com				

Secondary Rail Car Market

Average Premium/Discount to Tariff, \$/Car - Last Week

	Delivery Period			
	Apr-00	May-00	Jun-00	Jul-00
BNSF-GF	\$(61)	\$(56)	\$(56)	\$(48)
UP-Pool	\$(26)	\$(22)	\$(11)	\$(5)

Source: T&M/AMS/USDA. Data from Atwood/ConAgra., Harvest States Co-op, James B. Joiner Co., Tradewest Brokerage Co.;

GF=Guaranteed Freight, GEEP=Guaranteed Eqpt. Exchange, Pool=Guaranteed Pool

note... bids listed are market INDICATORS only & are NOT guaranteed prices, missing value=No Bid Quoted

Railroad Car 'Auction' Results

Average Premium/Discount to Tariff, \$/Car - Last Auction

Delivery for:	Apr-00	May-00	Jun-00
COT/N. Grain	no bid	no bid	no bid
COT/S. Grain	no bid	no bid	no bid
GCAS/Region 2	no bid	no bid	no bid
GCAS/Region 4	no bid	no bid	no bid

Source: T&M/AMS/USDA. Data from www.bnsf.com, www.uprr.com,
(COT=Certificate of Transportation; GCAS=Grain Car Allocation System)**Southbound Barge Freight Nominal Values**

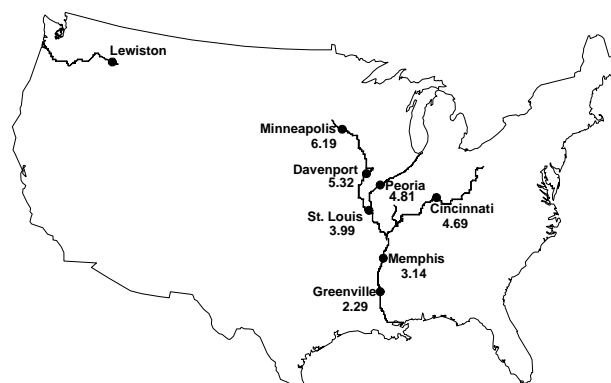
Index=Percent of Tariff, Based on 1976 Tariff Benchmark Rate

Week ended*	River/Region	Contract Period	Rate
Summary Of Daily Barge Trades Reported To St. Louis Merchants Exchange.			

(*) we regret that this data is currently unavailable

Southbound Barge Freight Spot Rates

	3/22/00	3/15/00	Apr. '00	June '00
Twin Cities	210	223	205	208
Mid-Mississippi	172	184	171	176
Illinois River	165	177	163	166
St. Louis	129	135	131	135
Lower Ohio	134	153	132	140
Cairo-Memphis	125	132	128	132

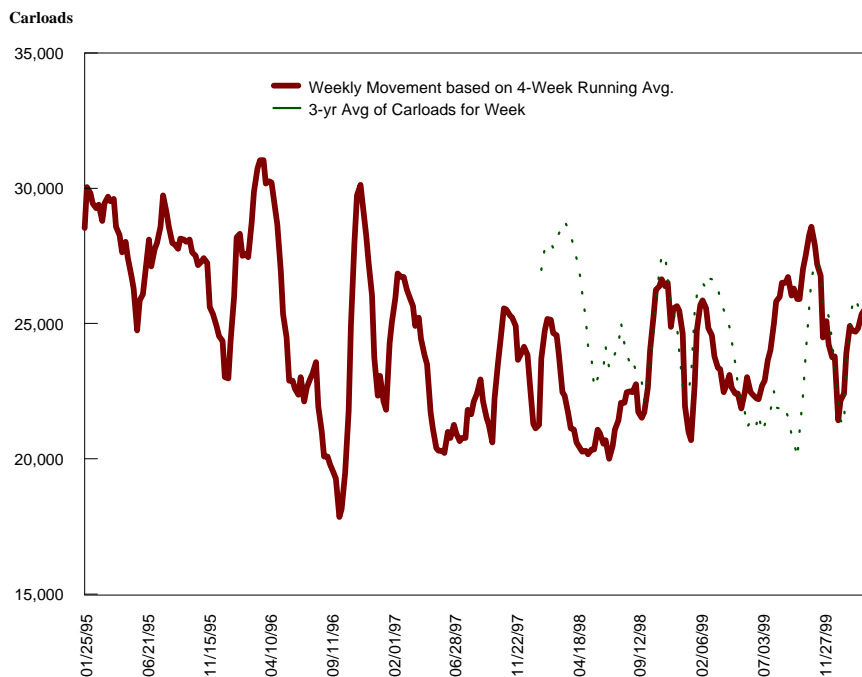
Source: Transportation & Marketing /AMS/USDA
nq=no quote**Barge Benchmark Tariff Rates
Est. 1976 - 'Tariff No. 7'**

Grain Car Loadings for Class I Railroads

Class I Railroad Grain Car Loadings	
Week Ending:	Carloads
3/4/00	25,858
3/11/00	24,817
3/18/00	25,337
Year to Date - 2000	277,089
Year to Date - 1999	268,578
Total 1999	1,269,741

**1998 - 52 weeks

* 1997 - 53 weeks



Class I Rail Carrier Grain Car Bulletin

Carloads

	Conrail	CSXT	<u>East</u>		<u>West</u>		<u>Canada</u>	
			IC	NS	BNSF	KCS	CN	CP
03/18/00	0	2,751	2,132	2,597	9,269	564	2,726	5,146
This Week Last Year	903	2,338	1,424	2,539	7,797	647	1,998	2,540
2000 YTD	0	31,765	21,963	32,737	96,777	7,308	31,739	47,752
1999 YTD	8,836	28,714	16,074	28,901	92,864	7,880	21,370	31,459
1999 Total	15,522	132,157	88,056	138,379	465,088	33,911	121,381	206,328
1998 Total	40,192	126,128	77,811	131,158	431,459	34,503	113,568	215,005

Source: Association of American Railroads

**1998 - 52 weeks

* 1997 - 53 weeks

Tariff Rail Rates for Unit Train Shipments

March 2000

Date Effective	Tariff Item	Commodity	Origin	Destination	Rate Per Car	Rate Per MT	Rate/Per Bushel*
03/06/00	45560	Wheat	Minneapolis, MN	Houston, TX	\$2,050	\$22.60	\$0.62
03/06/00	43521	Wheat	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$3,877	\$42.74	\$1.16
03/06/00	46540	Wheat	Kansas City, MO	Houston, TX	\$1,550	\$17.09	\$0.47
03/06/00	43586	Wheat	Kansas City, MO	Portland, OR	\$4,133	\$45.56	\$1.24
03/06/00	43581	Wheat	Omaha, NE	Portland, OR	\$3,805	\$41.94	\$1.14
03/06/00	31040	Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$3,000	\$33.07	\$0.84
03/06/00	31035	Corn	Kansas City, MO	Portland, OR	\$2,600	\$28.66	\$0.73
03/06/00	31040	Corn	Omaha, NE	Portland, OR	\$2,615	\$28.82	\$0.73
03/06/00	61180	Soybean	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$2,880	\$31.75	\$0.86
03/06/00	61180	Soybean	Omaha, NE	Portland, OR	\$2,480	\$27.34	\$0.74
05/01/98	61180	Soybean	Omaha, NE	Portland, OR	\$2,780	\$25.23	\$0.83

Source: www.bnsf.com

Approximate load per car = 100 tons: Corn 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

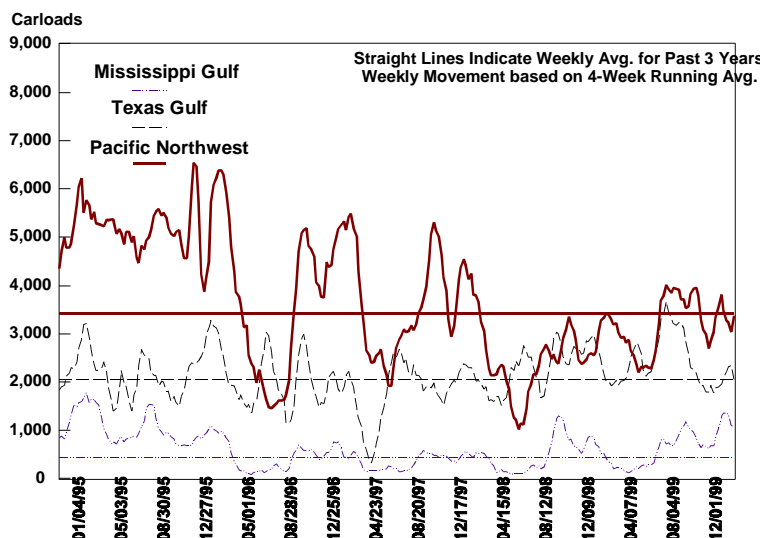
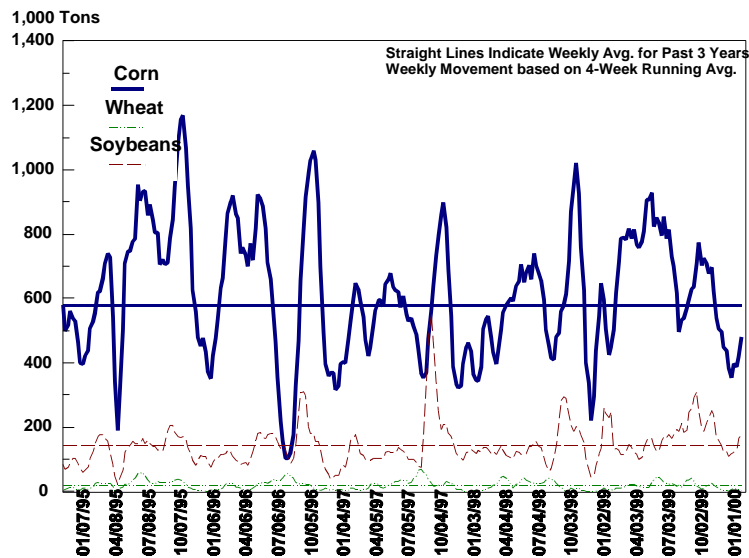
Rail Deliveries to Port

Carloads

	Mississippi Gulf	Texas Gulf	Pacific Northwest	Atlantic & East Gulf
Week Ending:				
02/09/00	1,810	2,370	3,896	830
02/16/00	1,187	2,580*	2,816	621
02/23/00	1,167	2,286*	3,128	525
03/01/00	1,195	2,046*	3,121	769
03/08/00	853	2,410*	3,102	770
03/15/00	1,111	1,516*	4,127	206
YTD 2000	12,074	22,411*	36,800	5,149
YTD 1999	7,529	28,949	30,944	4,735
Total 1998	23,844	115,321	138,461	12,505
Total 1997	20,152	93,265	195,953	9,147

Source: Transportation & Marketing/AMS/USDA

* Incomplete Data

Rail Deliveries to Port**Barge Movements - Locks 27****Barge Grain Movements**

for week ending 3/18/00

	Corn	Wht	Sybn	Total
1,000 Tons				
Mississippi River				
Rock Island, IL (L15)	225	0	30	254
Winfield, MO (L25)	317	2	155	479
Alton, IL (L26)	618	3	210	859
Granite City, IL (L27)	654	3	216	901
Illinois River (L8)	308	2	94	418
Ohio (L52)	45	5	40	117
Arkansas (L1)	0	35	30	65
2000 YTD	5,629	310	2,186	8,613
1999 YTD	5,711	550	1,535	8,760
Total 1999	31,001	2,401	8,674	45,134
Total 1998	31,226	2,420	8,866	45,625

Miss YTD: Calendar year totals include Miss/27, Ohio/52 and Ark/1.
Source: U.S. Army Corp of Engineers

U.S. Export Balances (1,000 Metric Tons)

	<i>HRW</i>	<i>SRW</i>	<i>HRS</i>	<u>Wheat</u> <i>SWW</i>	<i>DUR</i>	<i>All</i>	<u>Corn</u>	<u>Soybean</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Unshipped Exports-Crop Year</u>									
03/16/00	1,092	355	1,146	600	331	3,523	7,609	2,961	14,093
This Week Year Ago	1,595	695	999	610	227	4,126	7,392	2,765	14,283
<u>Cumulative Exports-Crop Year</u>									
99/00 YTD	8,875	3,523	4,389	3,146	781	20,714	26,940	18,770	66,424
98/99 YTD	8,486	1,660	5,305	4,630	760	20,841	25,468	17,713	64,022
97/98 Total	9,858	4,710	6,305	5,413	1,232	27,518	37,220	24,516	89,254
96/97 Total	7,387	3,645	7,864	6,105	963	25,965	44,476	24,501	94,942

Source: Foreign Agricultural Service YTD-Year-to-Date (www.fas.usda.gov) Crop Year:Wheat=5/31-6/01, Corn & Soybeans=9/01-8/31**Select U.S. Port Regions - Gain Inspections for Export - 1,000 Metric Tons**

	<u>Pacific Region</u>			<u>Mississippi Gulf</u>			<u>Texas Gulf</u>		
	<i>Wheat</i>	<i>Corn</i>	<i>Soybean</i>	<i>Wheat</i>	<i>Corn</i>	<i>Soybean</i>	<i>Wheat</i>	<i>Corn</i>	<i>Soybean</i>
03/23/00	241	42	0	101	726	502	105	0	96
2000 YTD	2,093	1,949	433	1,371	7,315	5,591	1,136	79	631
1999 YTD *	2,259	1,593	61	1,104	7,402	4,133	1,539	149	565
% of Last Year	19%	45%	66%	27%	23%	37%	16%	14%	45%
1998 Total	10,838	4,373	651	5,048	31,330	14,917	7,270	562	1,392

Source: Federal Grain Inspection Service * YTD-Year-to-Date (*98 = 53 week period)

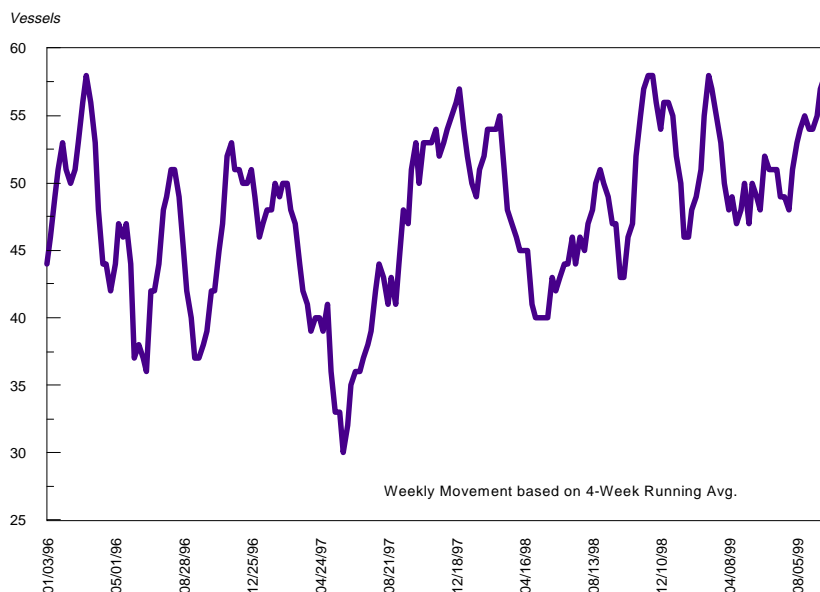
Select Canadian Ports - Export Inspections

1,000 Metric Tons, Crop Year

	<u>Wheat</u>	<u>Durum</u>	<u>Barley</u>
Week Ended: 3/23/00			
Vancouver	3,481	590	447
Prince Rupert	2,524	3	68
Prairie Direct	639	176	278
Thunder Bay	468	193	165
St. Lawrence	1,971	1,229	0
1999 YTD Exports	9,083	2,191	959
1998 YTD Exports	6,434	2,180	554
% of Last Year	141%	101%	173%

Source: Canadian Grains Commission

YTD-Year-to-Date Crop Year 8/1-7/31



**Gulf Region
Vessels Loaded
- Past 7 Days-**

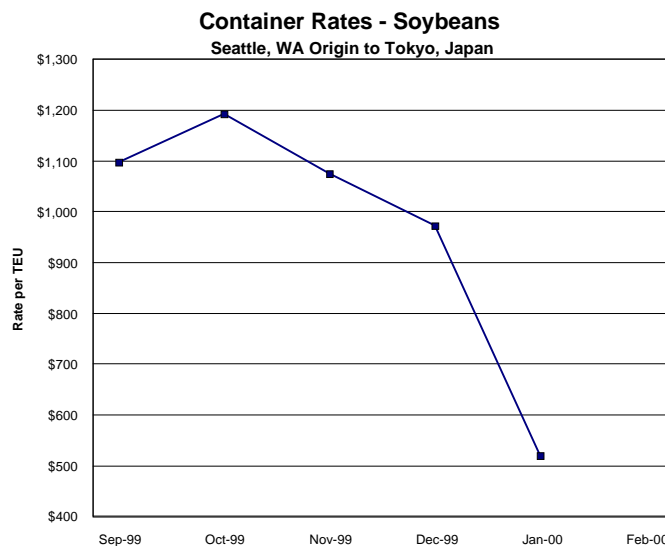
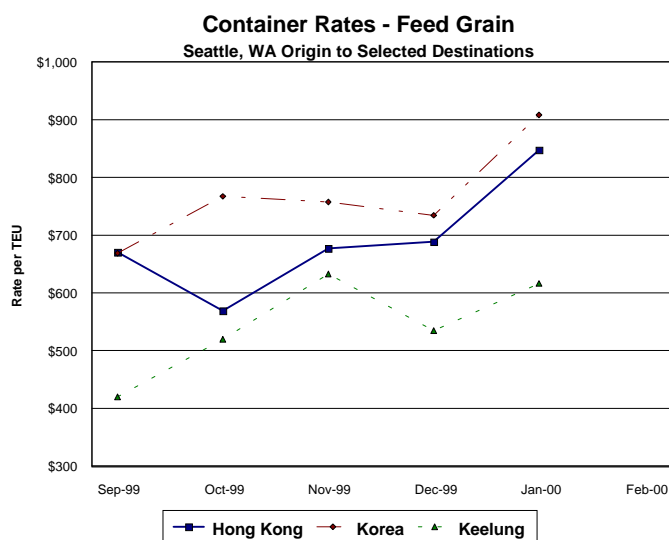
Port Region Ocean Grain Vessels

	Gulf			Pacific Northwest			Vancouver, B.C.		
	<u>In Port</u>	<u>Loaded 7-Days</u>	<u>Due Next 10-Days</u>	<u>In Port</u>	<u>Loaded 7-Days</u>	<u>Due Next 10-Days</u>	<u>In Port</u>	<u>Loaded 7-Days</u>	<u>Due Next 10-Days</u>
03/16/00	40	50	68	9			6	8	2
03/23/00	42	50	59	13			9	5	3
1999 Range	(14..47)	(39..65)	(34..80)	(6..18)			(2..20)	(2..15)	(0..9)
1998 Range	(19..62)	(34..64)	(40..93)				(1..19)	(3..14)	(0..10)
1999 Avg	32	52	65				9	9	3
1998 Avg	40	48	61				10	9	3
1997 Avg	33	45	58						

Source: Transportation & Marketing /AMS/ USDA

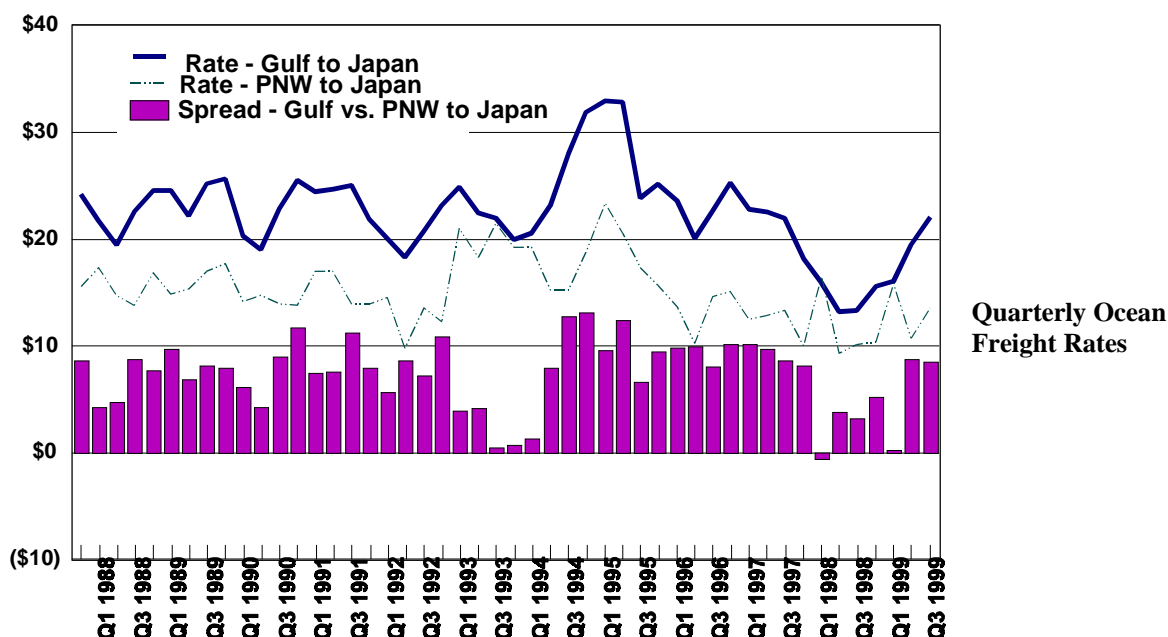
Container Ocean Freight Rates

Monthly Weighted Averages Based on Shipping Line Monthly Mkt. Share



Source: Transportation & Marketing/AMS/USDA

US\$/Metric Ton

**Quarterly Ocean Freight Rates**

Average Rates & Percentage Changes, U.S. Dollars/Metric Ton - Basis

	1999 4 th Qtr	1998 4 th Qtr	% Change		1999 4 th Qtr	1998 4 th Qtr	% Change
Gulf to				Pacific NW to			
Japan	\$22.07	\$13.33	66%	Japan	\$13.55	\$10.17	33%
Mexico	\$15.21	\$14.41	6%	Red Sea/ Arabian Sea			
Venezuela	\$12.10	\$10.87	11%				
N. Europe	\$13.68	\$8.81	55%	Argentina to			
N. Africa	\$21.65	\$15.26	42%	N. Europe	\$17.77	\$12.56	42%
				Japan			

Source: Transportation & Marketing/AMS/USDA; (*) rates shown are for metric ton (2,250 lbs.=one metric ton)

Ocean Freight Rates (Select Locations) - week ending 3/25/00

Export Region	Import Region	Grain	Month	Volume Loaded (Tons)	Freight Rate (\$/Ton)
Gulf	Estonia	Corn	Apr1/10	56,000/57,000	\$50.12/59.62
Gulf	Egypt	Wheat	Apr1/10	55,000	\$14.00
Gulf	Djibouti	Wheat	Spot	48,990	\$67.98
Gulf	Japan	Heavy Grain	Mar/Apr	42,000/54,000	\$21.00/22.25
Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Spot	55,000	\$20.00
Parana River	Colombia	Corn	Mar25/31	25,000	\$23.00
Parana River	Tunisia	Grains	Mar25/30	28,000	\$25.50
Rostock (Germany)	Saudi Red Sea	Barley	Mar25/30	55,000	\$16.50
Sweden	Jordan	Barley	Mar20/30	50,000	\$19.50
Sweden (Baltic Sea)	Saudi Red Sea	Barley	Prompt	55,000	\$18.00

Source: Maritime Research Inc.; rates shown are for long ton (2,240 lbs.=one long ton), F.O.B., except where otherwise indicated.